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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1025
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RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA IMMEDIATE 0101
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE 1855
RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS IMMEDIATE 0042
RUEHJB/AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA IMMEDIATE 1201
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SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE PASS TO AF/RSA MSKARDON

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KPKO](#) [UG](#) [ET](#) [BU](#) [SO](#)

SUBJECT: UGANDA RESPONSE TO DEMARCHE: SOMALIA - REINFORCING
AMISOM

REF: A) SECSTATE 134421 B) SCANLON EMAIL 12/30/08

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The Ambassador met with Ugandan Minister of Defense Crispus Kiyonga on December 29 to deliver reftel points and obtain an understanding of Uganda's ability to deploy an additional battalion of troops to the current African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). DATT also met with the Chief of Land Forces for the Ugandan People's Defense Forces. Officials indicated that Uganda is eager to deploy additional units to Somalia, but that armored vehicles are a prerequisite. Also, Uganda will not deploy without a thorough understanding of the African Union's funding stream, demonstrating that troop salaries and other funding will be provided in a more timely manner than in the past. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) The Ambassador and Poloff met with Ugandan Minister of Defense Crispus Kiyonga to deliver the points in ref A on December 29. The Joint Chief of Staff (JCS) of the Ugandan Peoples' Defense Forces (UPDF), Brigadier General Robert Rusoke, also attended the meeting. After hearing reftel points, Minister Kiyonga responded that the U.S. offer for transport and equipment is "excellent news," but that Uganda does have constraints making immediate deployment impossible before certain equipment and funding requirements are met.

¶3. (SBU) First, Kiyonga said, both the current battle group and future additional battalion need new vehicles, specifically troop carriers and armored vehicles. The previous battle group deployed with their own vehicles but these need to be repaired and any additional Ugandan units would also need armored vehicles. According to Kiyonga, Uganda cannot supply new vehicles itself because the Defense Ministry obtained Parliamentary authorization for the original deployment on the condition that it would be budget neutral, i.e., would not incur any additional costs to the Uganda national budget. Minister Kiyonga stated that Uganda was "flexible" on the list of equipment beyond the vehicles, however, and committed to providing Post a list of items as soon as possible. (Note: UPDF officials state the list will be ready by Friday, and we will review it with them. End note.)

¶4. (SBU) Second, the Government of Uganda (GOU) needs to obtain a stronger commitment from the African Union (AU) regarding its financial support for the deployment. Uganda wishes to see the AU's exact budget and funding stream for the \$67 million estimated three-month extension of the current mission to confirm that the funds for equipment and salaries will be forthcoming as planned. Kiyonga explained that the AU has not met past financial commitments, by, for example, not paying salaries to the Ugandan Battle Group

(UGABAG-3) from September to date. Though Uganda has received a commitment that the September to November salaries will be paid shortly, it still does not know when December will be paid. "The financial situation remains unclear," Kiyonga said. "We are ready to put in a battalion but we need to be sure they will have equipment and that it will be possible to maintain them." He stated that Uganda would be willing to make an arrangement along the lines of the one used by the UK and Burundi, by which the UK paid Burundian soldiers directly.

15. (SBU) Other UPDF officers provided further details about the parameters of a future Ugandan deployment. In a meeting with DATT, Commander of the UPDF Land Forces Lieutenant General Edward Katumba Wamala noted that Uganda would need a minimum of 10 days after a political decision to deploy has been made in order to identify an appropriate battalion, a process complicated by the UPDF's current operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Wamala stated he would put together a list of equipment to be submitted to Post by Friday, January 2. Wamala also stated that current vehicles in Mogadishu could be repaired to a limited extent, and committed to undertaking a full assessment in coordination with a Dyncorps contractor.

16. (SBU) Meanwhile, Uganda is moving forward with its planning, Minister Kiyonga stated. Minister Kiyonga and UPDF Chief of Defense Forces (CDF) General Aronda Nyakairima will travel to Bujumbura as soon as possible to coordinate with Burundi next steps and assess the impact of the Ethiopian withdrawal from Somalia. Thereafter, the two Ugandans plan

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to travel to Addis Ababa to meet with African Union officials. According to JCS Rusoke, the timing and pace of any future deployment will be determined after these meetings.

17. (SBU) JCS Rusoke advised the Ambassador on December 30 that Uganda could possibly deploy smaller, company-sized units, but that the vehicle requirements still remain. He stressed that Uganda would be in a better position to discuss future deployment after Minister of Defense Kiyonga and CDF Aronda complete their consultations in Burundi and Ethiopia.

18. (SBU) Comment: The GOU's attitude toward a deployment is encouraging, but it is clear that a deployment cannot occur by January 5. Uganda's current operation in the DRC against the Lord's Resistance Army is occupying the attention of officials and stretching UPDF equipment and manpower. Aside from this, in the meetings it was clear that the GOU trusts the U.S. commitment for equipment much more than it trusts an AU commitment to pay salaries and provide other support, which could cause significant complications should the AU prove unable to give Uganda the type of commitment or planning details it needs. On the issue of vehicles, there may be a small amount of flexibility because officials are not yet speaking with one voice. While Minister Kiyonga and JCS Rusoke state the vehicles are an absolute prerequisite for deployment, Wamala stated that Uganda can deploy if 10 CASSPIR fighting vehicles follow the deployment within 10 or 15 days. Post will be meeting with the UPDF to discuss the list of equipment needs on January 2 and will follow up with details at that time. Minister Kiyonga agreed to meet with the Ambassador after he returns from his trips to Burundi and Ethiopia. End Comment.

BROWNING